THE WORLD.

NUMBER XVIII.

By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *May* the 3d, 1753.

THE following letter had appeared earlier in the WORLD, if its length, or (what at preſent happens to be the ſame thing) its merit had not been ſo great. I have been trying to ſhorten it, without robbing it of beauties; but after many unſucceſsful attempts, I find that the ſpirit of it is (as the human ſoul is imagined to be by ſome ancient philoſophers) *totus in toto, et totus in qualibet parte.* I have, therefore, changed the form of my paper, chuſing rather to preſent my readers with an extraordinary half-ſheet, than to keep from them any longer what was ſent me for their inſtruction. At the ſame time I muſt beg leave to ſay, that I ſhall never think myſelf obliged to repeat my complaiſance, but to thoſe of my correſpondents, who, like the writer of this letter, can inform me of their grievances with all the elegance of wit.

To

To Mr. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

I CONSIDER you as ſupplemental to the law of the land. I take your authority to begin, where the power of the law ends. The law is intended to ſtop the progreſs of crimes by puniſhing them; your paper ſeems calculated to check the courſe of follies by expoſing them. May you be more ſucceſsful in the latter than the law is in the former.

UPON this principle I ſhall lay my caſe plainly before you, and deſire your publication of it as a warning to others. Though it may ſeem ridiculous to many of your readers, I can aſſure you, ſir, that it is a very ſerious one to me, notwithſtanding the ill-natured comfort which I might have, of thinking it of late a very common one.

I AM a gentleman of a reaſonable paternal eſtate in my county, and ſerve as knight of the ſhire for it. Having what is called a very good family-intereſt, my election incumbered my eſtate with a mortgage of only five thouſand pounds; which I have not been able to clear, being obliged by a good PLACE which I have got ſince, to live in town and in all the beſt company, nine months in the year. I married ſuitably to my circumſtances. My wife wanted neither fortune, beauty nor underſtanding. Diſcretion and good humour on her part, joined to good nature and good manners on mine, made us live comfortably together for eighteen years. One ſon, and one daughter were our only children. We complied with cuſtom in the education of both; my daughter learned ſome French and ſome dancing; my ſon paſſed nine years at Weſtminſter ſchool in learning only the words of two languages, long ſince dead, and not yet above half revived. When I took him away from ſchool, I reſolved to ſend him directly abroad, having been at Oxford myſelf. My wife approved of my deſign, but tacked a propoſal of her own to it, which ſhe urged with ſome earneſtneſs. "My dear, ſaid ſhe, I think "you do very right to ſend George abroad, for I love a "foreign education, though I ſhall not ſee the poor "boy a great while; but ſince we are to part for ſo long "a time, why ſhould not we take that opportunity of "carrying him ourſelves as far as Paris? The journey is "nothing; very little farther than to our own houſe in "the north; we ſhall ſave money by it; for every "thing is very cheap in France; it will form the girl, "who is of a right age for it; and a couple of months

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" with a good French and dancing maſter will perfect " her in both, and give her an air and manner that " may help her off in theſe days, when huſbands are " not plenty, eſpecially with only five thouſand pounds " to her fortune. Several of my acquaintance who " have lately taken trips to Paris, have told me, that " to be ſure we ſhould take this opportunity of going " there. Beſides, my dear, as neither you nor I have " ever been abroad, this little jaunt will amuſe and " even improve us; for it is the eaſieſt thing in the " world to get into all the beſt company at Paris."

My wife had no ſooner ended her ſpeech (which I eaſily perceived to be the reſult of meditation), than my daughter exerted all her little eloquence in ſeconding her mother's motion. " Ay, dear papa, ſaid ſhe, let " us go with brother to Paris; it will be the charming- " eſt thing in the world; we ſhall ſee all the neweſt " faſhions there; I ſhall learn to dance of Marſeil; in " ſhort, I ſhall be quite another creature after it. You " ſee how my couſin Kitty was improved by going to " Paris laſt year; I hardly knew her again when ſhe " came back; do, dear papa, let us go."

The abſurdity of the propoſal ſtruck me at firſt, and I foreſaw a thouſand inconveniencies in it, though not half ſo many as I have ſince felt. However knowing, that direct contradiction, though ſupported by the beſt arguments, was not the likelieſt method to convert a female diſputant; I ſeemed a little to doubt, and contented myſelf with ſaying, " That I was not, at firſt " ſight at leaſt, ſenſible of the many advantages which " they had enumerated; but that on the contrary I ap- " prehended a great deal of trouble in the journey, and " many inconveniencies in conſequence of it. That I " had not obſerved many men of my age conſiderably " improved by their travels; but that I had lately ſeen " many women of hers, become very ridiculous by " theirs; and that for my daughter, as ſhe had not a " fine fortune, I ſaw no neceſſity of her being a fine " lady." Here the girl interrupted me, with ſaying, " For that very reaſon, papa, I ſhould be a fine lady. " Being in faſhion is often as good as being a fortune; " and I have known, air, dreſs, and accompliſhments " ſtand many a woman in ſtead of a fortune." " Nay, " to be ſure, added my wife, the girl is in the right in " that; and if with her figure, ſhe gets a certain air " and manner, I cannot ſee why ſhe may not reaſo-

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" nably hope to be as advantageouſly married, as lady " Betty Townly, or the two miſs Bellairs, who had, " none of them, ſuch good fortunes." I found by all this that the attack upon me was a concerted one, and that both my wife and daughter were ſtrongly infected with that migrating diſtemper, which has of late been ſo epidemical in this kingdom, and which annually carries ſuch numbers of our private families to Paris, to expoſe themſelves there as Engliſh, and here, after their return, as French. Inſomuch that I am aſſured that the French call thoſe ſwarms of Engliſh which now, in a manner, over-run France, a ſecond incurſion of the Goths and Vandals.

I ENDEAVOURED as well as I could to avert this impending folly, by delays and gentle perſuaſions, but in vain; the attacks upon me were daily repeated, and ſometimes enforced by tears. At laſt I yielded, from meer good-nature, to the joint importunities of a wife and daughter whom I loved. Not to mention the love of eaſe and domeſtic quiet, which is, much oftener than we care to own, the true motive of many things that we either do or omit.

MY conſent being thus extorted, our ſetting out was preſſed. The journey wanted no preparations; we ſhould find every thing in France. My daughter who ſpoke ſome French, and my ſon's governor who was a Swiſs, were to be our interpreters upon the road; and when we came to Paris, a French ſervant or two would make all eaſy.

BUT, as if providence had a mind to puniſh our folly, our whole journey was a ſeries of diſtreſſes. We had not ſailed a league from Dover, before a violent ſtorm aroſe, in which we had like to have been loſt. Nothing could equal our fears but our ſickneſs, which perhaps leſſened them: at laſt we got into Calais, where the inexorable cuſtom-houſe officers took away half the few things which we had carried with us. We hired ſome chaizes, which proved to be old and ſhattered ones, and broke down with us at leaſt every ten miles. Twice we were over-turned, and ſome of us hurt, though there are no bad roads in France. At length, the ſixth day, we got to Paris, where our banker had provided a very good lodging for us; that is, very good rooms, very well furniſhed, and very dirty. Here the great ſcene opens. My wife and daughter, who had been a good deal diſheartened by our diſtreſſes, recovered their ſpirits, and

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grew extremely impatient for a conſultation of the neceſſary trades-people, when luckily our banker and his *lady*, informed of our arrival, came to make us a viſit. He graciouſly brought me five thouſand livres, which he aſſured me was not more than what would be neceſſary for our firſt ſetting out, as he called it; while his wife was pointing out to mine the moſt compendious method of ſpending three times as much. I told him that I hoped that ſum would be very near ſufficient for the whole time; to which he anſwered coolly, "No, ſir, "nor ſix times that ſum, if you propoſe, as to be ſure "you do, to appear here *honnêtement*." This I confeſs ſtartled me a good deal; and I called out to my wife, "Do you hear that, child?" She replied unmoved, "Yes, "my dear; but now that we are here, there is no help "for it; it is but for once, upon an extraordinary occa- "ſion; and one would not care to appear among ſtran- "gers like ſcrubs." I made no anſwer to this ſolid reaſoning, but reſolved within myſelf to ſhorten our ſtay, and leſſen our follies as much as I could. My banker, after having charged himſelf with the care of procuring me a *caroſſe de remiſe* and a *valet de place* for the next day, which in plain Engliſh is a hired coach, and a footman, invited us to paſs all the next day at his houſe, where he aſſured us that we ſhould not meet with bad company. He was to carry me and my ſon before dinner to ſee the public buildings, and his lady was to call upon my wife and daughter to carry them to the genteeleſt ſhops, in order to fit them out to appear *honnêtement*. The next morning I amuſed myſelf very well with ſeeing, while my wife and daughter amuſed themſelves ſtill better by preparing themſelves for being ſeen; till we met at dinner at our banker's, who, by way of ſample of the excellent company to which he was to introduce us, preſented to us an Iriſh abbé, and an Iriſh captain of Clare's; two attainted Scotch fugitives, and a young Scotch ſurgeon who ſtudied midwifry at the *Hotel Dieu*. It is true, he lamented that ſir Harbottle Bumper, and ſir Clotworthy Guzzledown with their families, whom he had invited to meet us, happened unfortunately to have been engaged to go and drink brandy at Nucilly. Though this company ſounds but indifferently, and though we ſhould have been very ſorry to have kept it in London, I can aſſure you, ſir, that it was the beſt we kept the whole time we were at Paris.

I WILL omit many circumſtances which gave me uneaſineſs, though they would probably afford ſome entertainment to your readers, that I may haſten to the moſt material ones.

IN about three days the ſeveral mechanics, who were charged with the care of diſguiſing my wife and daughter, brought home their reſpective parts of this transformation, in order that they might appear *honnêtement*. More than the whole morning was employed in this operation; for we did not ſit down to dinner till near five o'clock. When my wife and daughter came at laſt into the eating room, where I had waited for them at leaſt two hours, I was ſo ſtruck with their transformation, that I could neither conceal nor expreſs my aſtoniſhment. "Now, my dear, ſaid my wife, we can "appear a little like chriſtians." "And ſtrollers too, "replyed I; for ſuch have I ſeen, at Southwark-fair, "the reſpectable Syſigambis, and the lovely Pariſatis. "This cannot ſurely be ſerious!" "Very ſerious, "depend upon it, my dear, ſaid my wife; and pray, by "the way, what may there be ridiculous in it? No ſuch "Syſigambis neither, continued ſhe; Betty is but ſixteen, and you know I had her at four and twenty." As I found that the name of Syſigambis, carrying an idea of age along with it, was offenſive to my wife, I waved the parallel; and addreſſing myſelf in common to my wife and daughter, I told them "I perceived that there was "a painter now at Paris, who coloured much higher "than Rigault, though he did not paint near ſo like; "for that I could hardly have gueſſed them to be the "pictures of themſelves." To this they both anſwered at once, "that red was not paint; that no colour in "the world was *fard* but white, of which they proteſted they had none." "But how do you like my *pompon*, papa, continued my daughter? Is it not a charming one? I think it is prettier than mamma's." "It "may, child, for any thing that I know; becauſe I do "not know what part of all this frippery thy *pompon* is." "It is this, papa," replied the girl, putting up her hand to her head, and ſhowing me in the middle of her hair a complication of ſhreds and rags of velvets, feathers, and ribbands, ſtuck with falſe ſtones of a thouſand colours, and placed awry. "But what haſt thou done to thy "hair, child, ſaid I? it is blue! Is that painted too by "the ſame eminent hand that coloured thy cheeks?"

"Indeed,

" Indeed, papa, anſwered the girl, as I told you before, " there is no painting in the caſe; but what gives my " hair that bluiſh caſt is the grey powder, which has al- " ways that effect upon dark coloured hair, and ſets off " the complexion wonderfully." " Grey powder, child, " ſaid I, with ſome ſurprize! Grey hairs, I knew were " venerable; but till this moment I never knew that " they were genteel." " Extremely ſo, with ſome com- " plexions, ſaid my wife; but it does not ſuit with " mine, and I never uſe it." " You are much in the " right, my dear, replied I, not to play with edge- " tools. Leave it to the girl." This, which perhaps was too haſtily ſaid, and ſeemed to be a ſecond part of the Syſigambis, was not kindly taken; my wife was ſilent all dinner time, and I vainly hoped, aſhamed. My daughter, drunk with dreſs and ſixteen, kept up the converſation with herſelf, till the long-wiſhed-for moment of the opera came, which ſeparated us, and left me time to reflect upon the extravagancies which I had already ſeen, and upon the ſtill greater which I had but too much reaſon to dread.

From this period to the time of our return to England, every day produced ſome new and ſhining folly, and ſome improper expence. Would to God that they had ended as they began, with our journey! but unfortunately we have imported them all. I no longer underſtand, or am underſtood in my family. I hear of nothing but *le bon ton*. A French valet de chambre, who I am told is an excellent ſervant and fit for every thing, is brought over to curl my wife's and my daughter's hair, to *mount a deſſert* as they call it, and occaſionally to *announce viſits*. A very ſlatternly, dirty, but at the ſame time a very genteel French maid, is appropriated to the uſe of my daughter. My meat too is as much diſguiſed in the dreſſing by a French cook, as my wife and my daughter are by their red, their *pompons*, their ſcraps of dirty gauze, flimſy ſattins, and black callicoes; not to mention their affected broken Engliſh, and mangled French, which jumbled together, compoſe their preſent language. My French and Engliſh ſervants quarrel daily, and fight, for want of words to abuſe one another. My wife is become ridiculous by being tranſlated into French, and the verſion of my daughter will, I dare ſay, hinder many a worthy Engliſh gentleman from attempting to read her. My expence (and conſequently my debt) increaſes;